

AMADOR COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION AMADOR COUNTY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

December 5, 2005

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Executive Office,
California Department of Education
1430 N Street, Suite 5602
Sacramento, CA 95814

To Whom It May Concern:

The Amador County Unified School District and County Office of Education would like to comment on alternatives to the California High School Exit Examination, as called for in a November 30 C.D.E. notification.

While the great majority of our students pass the CAHSEE on their first attempt, we still have a handful of students who are seniors who have not done so. We intend to offer focus courses to support these students in their final semester of high school but we would also like the C.D.E. to consider the following alternative.

If a student has a grade point average of 2.5 or better in academic classes over the course of (a) grades 9-12 or (b) grades 10-12, has completed a portfolio pertaining to a special project(s) accomplished during high school and presented this portfolio to a district-community committee successfully, then that student has earned his/her diploma.

I can give two very clear examples of students with high grades (which we believe is the best predictor of academic success beyond high school), involved in several activities, and would not or may not pass an exam such as the CAHSEE.

This alternative and scenario may seem far-fetched but if just one student is hurt by the CAHSEE without other considerations, then there is an injustice.

Sincerely,

Mike Carey, Ed.D. Superintendent